

Southwest NOW!

Cedar Hill | DeSoto | Duncanville
MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 2015



Dining
Deals
Inside!

Team Eco Investigation

Lovers of nature unleash learning experiences for Cedar Hill students

Museum of Art

At Home With Cleavon
and Lula Wilson

Sisterhood Forever

An Officer and a Gentleman

Growing a Winter Garden

Putting the Care
in Family Medical

In the Kitchen With
Kizzy Miller

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EAGLE EXPRESS

Accelerating Expectations 2020



DeSoto ISD Campus Principals with Performance Pay bags.

SUCCESS AND EXPECTATIONS

On August 17, DeSoto ISD Superintendent David Harris revealed the district's new **Accelerating Expectations 2020** campaign at the annual employee Convocation event. The five-year plan toward making DeSoto ISD a premier school district includes three tenets of focus:

1. 21st Century STEAM Academics
2. Individual Accountability
3. Organizational Mindfulness

Dr. Harris celebrated the gains made over the past three years, with the full engagement transformation accomplished as all 12 schools Met Standard for TEA this year. He then challenged all employees to accelerate their expectations for students, peers, parents and themselves to change the speed of growth for individuals and the district.

"We cannot slide backwards or merely stay the course, we must accelerate in all facets of education across the district," stated Dr. Harris. "Our students are flourishing in the programs we have built to meet their academic needs and fulfill their dreams, but we must take it to the next level."

He also congratulated the five campuses who earned TEA distinctions and the eight campuses who earn performance pay for their accomplishments in academics and attendance. Over \$250K was distributed to the 479 employees of the eight schools with the average check just over \$500.

Convocation guests enjoyed a motivational keynote by Vernice Armour aka *FlyGirl*, America's first African American female combat pilot, who encouraged DeSoto Eagles to take off from where you are and embrace the notion that we all have permission to engage, we just have to commit to the commitment - to raise all student academic achievement to the next level.

Calendar

Saturday, September 5, 7 a.m.-7 p.m. - Tax Ratification Election

Saturday, September 5, 2 p.m. - DHS Football v. IMG Academy, Eagle Stadium

Monday, September 7 - Labor Day Holiday

Monday, September 14, 6:30 p.m. - Board Meeting, Board Room

Wednesday, September 16, 6 p.m. - College Fair at DeSoto High School

Wednesday, September 23, 6 p.m. - DHS Homecoming Parade

Friday, September 25, 7:30 p.m. - DHS v. Grand Prairie, Homecoming Game

NEWS TO KNOW

TAX RATIFICATION ELECTION

DeSoto ISD has called for a Tax Ratification Election on Saturday, September 5. If the TRE passes, it will allow DeSoto ISD to exchange 'debt tax money' for 'operations tax money' which will **save taxpayers a penny while raising \$4.6M per year for students!**

COFFEE & CONVERSATIONS

Meetings - 7:30 p.m.

Met Dr. Harris for coffee!

- **Tuesday, September 15** - Cockrell Hill ES
- **Tuesday, September 29** - McCowan MS
- **Tuesday, October 13** - Frank Moates ES

1ST TUESDAY TOWN HALL

Meetings - 6:30 p.m.

Join us for an open conversation about DeSoto ISD.

- **Tuesday, October 6** - DeSoto High School
- **Tuesday, November 3** - McCowan MS
- **Tuesday, December 1** - Northside ES

ARE YOU READY FOR FOOTBALL?

Join the Eagles this season for another exciting year.

- Sept. 5 v. IMG, Eagle Stadium
- Sept. 12 v. SOC, Eagle Stadium
- Sept. 17 v. Cibolo Steel, Mary Hardin Stadium
- Sept. 25 v. Grand Prairie, Eagle Stadium

LADY EAGLES VOLLEYBALL

Home games start at 6:30 p.m.

- Sept. 1 v. Car. Creekview
- Sept. 11 v. Midlothian
- Sept. 15 v. Mansfield
- Sept. 25 v. Grand Prairie
- Sept. 29 v. Cedar Hill

Check the web for away games as well as the remaining fall sports schedules.



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ON THE COVER



These adults have partnered to ensure effective learning for children as they experience Dogwood Canyon.

Photo by Amy Ramirez.

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Editor's Note

Southwest Friends,

Fall always makes me think of books. I love reading. I cannot imagine a single day without a book in my hands. No matter how many words I have written or how many articles or books I have edited, I simply cannot do without reading. I have books in my car, on the arm of my couch, next to my bed and packed in my suitcase. I guess that comes as no surprise since words are my commodity.

When the kids were young, breakfast was no-nonsense, and dinner was family time, but lunch — if everyone wanted to read, everyone could read. So I'd toss a cardboard book on the high chair, and we all read our way through lunch. In fact, I like nothing better than a meal by myself with a book to read.

Here's to reading!

Beverly

Beverly Shay
SouthwestNOW Editor
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* District 8-6A Game



Billie & Bruce Ballengee, Haily Summerford and Orlando Riddick.

TEAM ECO INVEST

Did you know there's an ecosystem cultivating and transforming education in a promising manner, offering children hands-on discovery and flat-out fun? Does adventure really impact learning? Can time outside the classroom raise test scores? For most children, being liberated to the outdoors is a welcome change from sitting at a desk and absorbing facts. Kids love heading outside, so a field trip provides a great change of pace. But can an outdoor field trip make a big difference in how and what a child learns and retains?

Measurable outcome, added value, empowering resources, quantifiable improvement — all of these are catchphrase terms used to evaluate educational success. Bruce Ballengee, who chairs the stewardship board at Dogwood Canyon Audubon Center, absolutely loves nature. His wife, Billie, has a passion for education. They saw an opportunity to support both their passions and aid their community by generously donating funds for an outstanding program and a study to prove its efficacy. They were joined by Orlando Riddick, the Cedar Hill School District superintendent who likes getting his hands on education, and the director of Dogwood Canyon, Haily Summerford. Now, children are improving their test scores by experiencing one of the most amazing ecosystems in the country, located right in our backyard.



Rosa, the Mexican milk snake, was named by one of the students.

INVESTIGATION

— By Beverly Shay

Wait a minute — do ecosystems, field trips and test scores even go together? You bet they do! The study statistics, available to those interested, prove it. Team Eco Investigation is something to look at and imitate! Just ask the fifth- and third-graders from Cedar Hill about their time at Dogwood Canyon, and you'll hear things like, "My dream came true today! I saw a redbird!" or "This is the best field trip ever! I don't want to go home! When can I come back?"

Teacher feedback included, "My students had a great time and were so excited about science. The activities here made what we have been learning in class real!" and "Everything was great. The kids enjoyed and learned from the trip!"

"Cedar Hill's green space has about 3,100 acres (4.8 square miles) of one of the most unique ecosystems in the United



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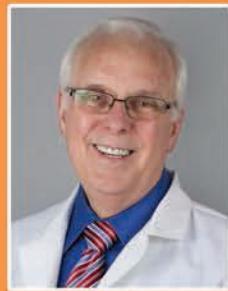
States," Bruce Ballengee explained. "The Austin Chalk limestone formation of the escarpment emerges where several ecosystems converge, attracting over 125 species of birds. It's a no-brainer to take advantage of this resource to impact the learning of our school children. We were able to fund a study that proves children are being quantitatively helped by the customized program Dogwood Canyon is offering in response to the assessment of STAAR scores that determined what areas fifth-graders needed help with."

"Many, if not most of the children who have come out to Dogwood Canyon, in conjunction with the program, have never been out in nature to this extent," Haily shared. "The program we offer here fits within the STEM guidelines for science, technology, engineering and math." When the students were asked to draw a scientist in the journals they



received as part of the program, most drew a male with messy hair, wearing a lab coat. They hadn't even conceived of scientists as being outside. "I hope the children's experience here will encourage them not only to conserve nature but to see conservation as a viable career choice. I also hope this program nurtures girls to become future conservationists," Haily added.

The Eco Investigation program offered in many Audubon centers nationwide has been tweaked to focus on and develop lifelong learning keys to connect classroom learning with the real world by an interplay with nature. "The children were struggling with the process of pulling apart the knowledge they were gaining in the classroom and then formulating a response that used the knowledge in real-world environments,"



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Superintendent Riddick remarked. "Here at the center, the children are *using* the scientific method, not just reading or hearing about it. They're seeing its application outside the classroom." Soft skills of education are also being implemented — group dynamics, presentation, leadership skills, computation, reading and writing literacy.

"Exposure is so important to learning," Superintendent Riddick emphasized. "I like to be outside, and this type of learning experience is what I want for every student. Finding Dogwood Canyon and meeting Haily, I knew we had to develop a strategy for kids to take home what is available here."

"The test scores have provided an antidote for skeptics by proving learning is accelerating and showing the program is meeting many of the TEKS standards," Bruce remarked. "The study is also inspiring the community to collaborate at meeting the needs of the community. People need to realize this study is the first of its kind in Texas and the second in the nation, where scores are being directly affected and improved by the science-based, problem-solving conservation studies. We've added a cutting-edge element to our ISD, which other ISDs will want to imitate."

During the annual fundraiser, Cocktails in the Canyon, another fun event was sparked. "We auctioned off the naming rights for our new Mexican milk snake," Haily remarked. "Bruce purchased the

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rights and decided to hold a naming contest among the Cedar Hill students who have been through the program here. Of the more than 650 names submitted for the snake, the center staff narrowed it down to three finalists, each of whom were given a scholarship to summer camp at Dogwood Canyon and one for a friend. Bruce drew for the winner, and the snake was named Rosa. The winner was given a pizza party for her entire class, and she was recognized at the school board meeting.” This provided another opportunity for children to see how education works in the community, as well as in the classroom and out in the real world.

“We really want to give a shout out to the city of Cedar Hill for their help and vision,” Bruce remarked. “The city provided pre- and post-care for the kids who came to summer camp at Dogwood Canyon. It’s been a safe fun and affordable learning environment with different themes each week.” Cedar Hill ISD provided breakfast and lunch for the campers, most of whom attended camp all summer.

Project WILD, a K-12 curriculum and activity guide focusing on wildlife and habitat, is being used by Dogwood Canyon to train teachers, giving them a foundation for bringing nature and science into the classroom with activities to use before and after visiting the canyon. Community leaders are encouraged to participate to develop an entrepreneurial ownership of education. “A resource like this needs to be a shared experience, regardless of wealth or background,” Supt. Riddick added. To make Dogwood Canyon more accessible, there is no entrance fee. Now, more visitors are coming and discovering the learning opportunity in our own backyard. **NOW**

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-Marco Rivera

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Duncanville ISD Meets and Exceeds Standards in TEA Accountability Ratings



All 18 Duncanville Independent School district campuses met state standards for student achievement, student progress, closing performance gaps and postsecondary readiness. The district's official rating from TEA is 'Met Standard'.

"We are pleased that all of our campuses met standard, which indicates that students are learning what they need to know in our classrooms," said Dr. Deborah Cron, Duncanville ISD Interim Superintendent. "Our teachers, campus administrators and support personnel have worked hard this last year and these results show it."

Schools Receiving Distinction Designations

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- *Top 25% Student Progress
- *Top 25% Closing Performance Gaps
- *Post Secondary Readiness

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- *Math

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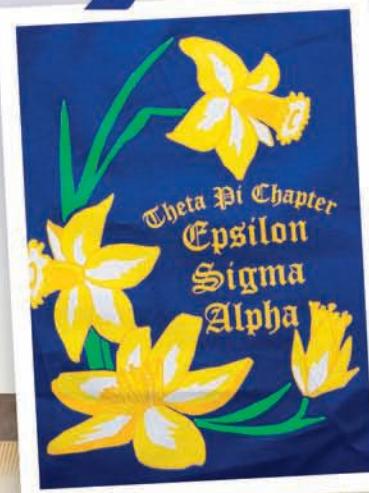
- *Student Progress

*Ratings for the 2014-2015 school year



Sisterhood Forever

— By Syndi Massey



When a group of women began meeting in a spare room at the First National Bank, they had no idea the newly formed Theta Pi Chapter of the Epsilon Sigma Alpha International Sorority would still be impacting lives 50 years later. In 1965, Zonell Trout, a field agent from the sorority, approached a group of ladies at the bank hoping they would be interested in helping to expand the sorority. Word began to spread from friend to friend about this new organization and soon their membership reached 29 women of all ages.





Kathy Eddy and Sherry Perkins are proud of all the ways Theta Pi has served the community.

In the beginning, most of the ladies were young mothers or businesswomen looking for a way to connect with other women for the good of the community. Olivia Harrington was one of these charter members. She is the only charter member to this day who has not let her membership lapse. "At first, joining was just a thing to do," Olivia said. "I was a young mother and needed to get out of the house! Looking back, I realize there is no way I could have done this much service without Epsilon Sigma Alpha. It has expanded my life."

The first ESA chapter began in 1929 in Jacksonville, Texas. According to history on their website, the organization was formed "for the purpose of preparing its members to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world." Nearly a century later, members of ESA have seen the world change many times. "As young women evolved over the years, so did the group," said Kathy Eddy, 30-year veteran of the group. "What began with young mothers changed to working mothers and now retired women."



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ESA chapters operate similarly to college sororities in that they "rush" potential members when they have openings. The maximum number Theta Pi can have at one time is 35. The group focuses on three aspects: service, education and social. Each year begins in September and ends in May. Meetings are monthly and generally last for three hours. Whether it's going through a book together or having a guest speaker, there is always an educational element to each meeting. The ladies are also required to serve on one major and one minor committee.

"Members can choose how involved they want to be," Sherry Perkins said. "We have a minimum requirement for how many committees to serve on, but a member can be on every committee if she chooses. As current president, I am involved in every committee, so I know what is going on across the board."

Involvement does not end with the monthly meetings. According to the bylaws, the social calendar must include at least five events a year. Past events have included slumber parties, couples' treasure hunts, square dances, garage sale shopping and girls' nights out.

"We plan our calendar for the year each June and stick to it," Sherry said. "There is a good mix between things to do with just the girls and activities that include the family."

Theta Pi is most recognized for the service provided to the community. In



the beginning, they were mostly giving donations, but decided they also wanted to be physically involved in doing good within the community. Some of their accomplishments include funding a room at the Duncanville Senior Citizen Center and furnishing the kitchen at the Duncanville Community Center. Members also serve at the North Texas Food Bank regularly. "Our service efforts are focused locally," Sherry said. "We have helped the Tri-City Animal Shelter, Hope Mansion, adopted teachers at local schools and volunteered at Duncanville Outreach Ministry."

"I joined Theta Pi for the opportunity to serve my community and to broaden my education, but discovered the bonus of a wide circle of friends," Kathy said. "Over the years, I have found I ended up getting way more out of it from this group of women than I ever expected."

The list of people and groups that the women in Theta Pi have helped is long and continues to grow each year. They raise their own money to fund their projects. From 1982 until 1994, they hosted the Duncanville Christmas Home Tour. One of their first fundraising efforts was a spring fashion show that began in 1974 and ran for over a decade. In 1995, the group developed the Theta Pi Cancer Awareness Run and Walk, which took place at Lakeside Park. This walk was organized after the passing of their sister, Carol Jackson and Duncanville basketball

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Olivia Harrington has been a member of Theta Pi for 50 years with no lapse in membership.

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coach Sandra Meadows. The money raised from this event allowed them to create a scholarship in their names, as well as provide cancer screenings for underprivileged women at Methodist Charlton Medical Center.

"The fight against cancer has been one of our greatest focuses," Sherry said. "Even though we do not raise funds by hosting the annual walk anymore, we still contribute to those facing cancer. This year, we were able to donate some of the funds we raised to a local woman who graduated from Duncanville High School and is currently battling cancer."

Over the years, the group has seen members come and go, some to return decades later. Looking back 50 years ago, charter member Judy Smithey recalls joining Theta Pi for many of the same reasons that Olivia did. She too was a new mother and wanted to increase her social circle. Unfortunately, a move across the country meant Judy had to deactivate for a while. She rejoined as soon as she could. "I was excited to expand my circle of friends beyond the wives of my husband's former football teammates," Judy said. "Becoming a charter member of ESA provided me the opportunity

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Judy Smithey, Olivia Harrington and Patti Clemmer are charter members of Theta Pi.

to serve our community in the company of outstanding women who became my lifelong friends. It is very satisfying to look back on these five decades and realize the impact of these women and all we have been able to accomplish individually and as a group."

As a part of their yearly tradition, the group puts together a scrapbook of the social events, education meetings and service projects that took place. Photos from these books date back to some of Theta Pi's earliest events, including Duncanville's Western Week parade in the late 1960s. These memories will all be relived this year as their 50th anniversary approaches. Current members of Theta Pi are planning a reunion dinner and program to be held on October 17. As part of their preparation, they are trying to track down all charter and past members. Nearly 175 women have been a part of this organization over the last five decades.

"We hope many people who have been a part of Theta Pi in the past can make it to our celebration," Olivia said. "For the last 50 years, we have been a dedicated group of women who want to serve our community. We've come together to educate ourselves and socialize. It will be nice to have as many of us in one room again as possible." **NOW**



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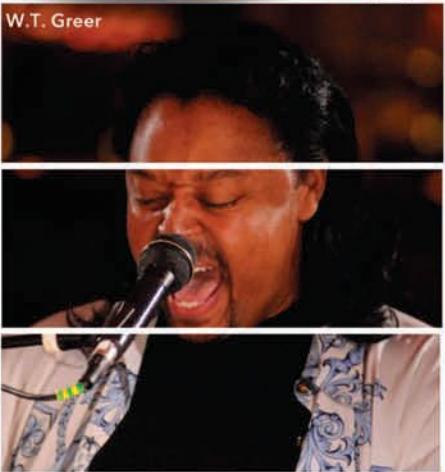


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Museum of Art

— By Katrina D. Lewis

At Home With Cleavon and Lula Wilson

Within Dallas County, there are numerous museums and galleries where art aficionados can view awe-inspiring sculptures, and paintings seemingly come to life on humble canvases, as well as figurines so life-like their likeness reminds the viewer of a long-revered family member. Yet, just off one unassuming busy thoroughfare in DeSoto, Cleavon and Lula Wilson have amassed a fantastic collection of African-American art in a cozy home of collectibles, memorabilia and love.





Together for 58 years, the couple's love story has taken them from California back to their Texas roots. Along the way, art finds from dozens of trips and cruises around the world have grown their collection to every room and inch of their two-story home.

Meeting each other in high school, Lula candidly admits love was not on her mind when Cleavon introduced himself to her in the school hallway. But, he eventually won her over. "I grew up in the city, and he grew up in the country," she shared. "I met him when they bused him to our school. He was interested in me, but I wasn't too interested in him," she reflected, laughing at the memory.

Even with a move to California mid-high school, Cleavon kept in touch with his future bride. "We dated long-distance," he said. "We'd date during the summers, but she still dated other boys, and I still dated other girls, because that was our agreement. And when I came back the year before our senior year, I asked her to marry me and move to California." Though he was met with a bit of skepticism and a firm "no" from Lula's mother, who valued her daughter earning her high school diploma over any wedding ring, after both finished high school, they married and eventually had two daughters.

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The Wilsons spent 55 years in the Golden State, though understandably, the initial move was a bit challenging for Lula, who was unaccustomed to “Los Angeles, California, ways” after being raised in the South. However, their relocation was the beginning of an affinity for art with African-American themes, which has lasted through time. “I became interested in black art, because when I was a kid, most of the black art was Aunt Jemima-type stuff,” Lula said. “As an adult, I ran across some prints

that were different, so I became quite interested in black art.”

For anyone entering the Wilsons’ home, the sheer beauty of a vivid quilt representing sculptures created by esteemed artist Thomas Blackshear hanging on a wall will undoubtedly stop them in their tracks. Full of bold colors, geometric shapes and generational imagery, the quilt is based on *The Threads that Bind* sculpture commissioned for the artist’s 1994 Ebony Visions collection. Images on the colorful quilt are known

as *The Storyteller*, *The Music Maker*, *The Protector* and more. Part of a limited collection, the quilt is only one of just over 8,000 sold. On a small table nearby, a companion Blackshear figurine depicts three generations of women working diligently on a replica of the same quilt hanging on the wall.

Interestingly enough, the couple’s collection began with a limited-edition print now hung prominently over the fireplace in a living area just to the right of a carpeted and gracefully-curved staircase leading to a spacious second-floor landing. Full of natural light shining through a set of French doors, a warm glow highlights the scenic pool area in the couple’s expansive backyard and a work by Charles A. Bibbs entitled *Reunion*. The print depicts a grandmother clad in a robe of deep blues and greens cradling an infant. The piece was purchased from a JCPenney store in California. “I went into the store, and I said, ‘Hmm, I like this.’ At the time, it was more than \$600, and I couldn’t afford it.” After watching the print sit in the store and seeing the price drop 50 percent, Lula used a collection

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of coupons and a credit card opening option that offered an additional discount on merchandise. She was able to purchase the piece for about \$100. "That was my first time seeing art outside of the Aunt Jemima-type stuff," she admitted. "Ever since then, wherever I go, I always make sure to observe black art."

In the same living area, a plush couch and two coordinating chairs beckon for any and all to take a few moments to rest and gaze on the numerous family photographs protected by complementary frames. Also adorning the walls in this area are several works by Arthello Beck, a Dallas-born artist whose works in oils, watercolors and charcoals continue to draw admiration from many. And that includes Lula, who had the opportunity to meet Arthello before his death in 2004. "My sister-in-law knew Arthello, so she took me to his studio," she remembered. "I'd always go to his studio to see what he had when I came to visit Texas from California. I learned how to select a print — the lower the number, the greater the value." The Wilsons' have several of Arthello's signed works.

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In a formal dining area just off a second intimate living space where Cleavon and Lula kick back to watch their favorite shows, a gleaming china cabinet serves as the home for dozens of pieces of translucent, soft-hued, pink Depression glass. Dating back to the Great Depression, Depression glass has been highly coveted since the 1960s. Their collection includes complete sets of plates, glasses and other pieces. The formal dining area features artwork depicting family themes. This is echoed throughout the home via artwork, aged black and white photos of generations past and contemporary images of grandchildren caught mid-laugh and celebrating the milestones of life. "I guess that's the kind of artwork we like, ones that show strong families," Cleavon shared.

"I can remember my mom and my grandmother counting change to pay their poll taxes to vote," Lula said, gazing at *A Penny Short*, a print by Harry Roseland, depicting an elderly couple counting out coins for some unknown expense, their brows furrowed with perceived worry. "A lot of what we have just speaks to family."

Cleavon and Lula have passed their love of art on to their own children and grandchildren, gifting them with pieces and soundly advising them to hold on to their collection for future generations to enjoy. And there will be plenty pieces for them to cherish. Although they have admired and procured pieces from all over, including Germany, France and Italy, they still dream of visiting other destinations and seeing what catches their artful eyes. "We've done a lot of traveling, but I'd still like to go back to Jamaica and Aruba," Lula confessed. "And I want to go to London. There's no telling what I can still find." **NOW**

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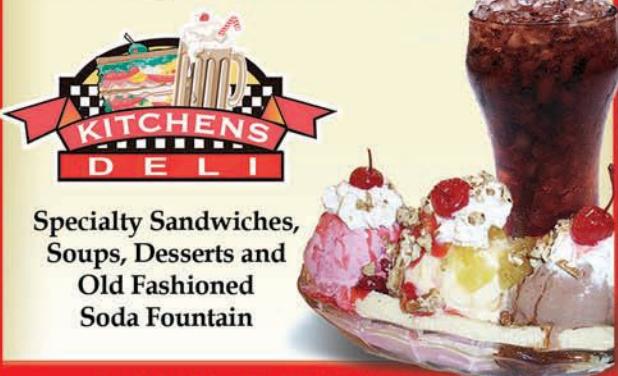
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An Officer and a Gentleman

— By Beverly Shay

DeSoto Police Chief Joseph Costa is a man of pride. "I tell all my officers to have pride in what they do. Pride stands for being professional, respectful, intelligent, dependable and ethical," he stated. This has been his standard for over 38 years in law enforcement. "I also tell those serving with me, 'Stay mindful of why you went into law enforcement. Use common sense, act with compassion, think things through.' This helps them stay grounded."

Chief Costa hails from Massachusetts, where his friend's dad was a state trooper. "I visited him at work," he recalled. He graduated from New Bedford High School having participated in football and track. "I attended St. Bonaventure University in New York graduating with a bachelor's in psychology, which has been helpful in my work," Chief Costa admitted.

"When I was a junior in college, my dad told me the Massachusetts State Police Department was offering entrance exams. I came home to take the test, but they held our class for three years," Chief Costa recalled. He worked as an elementary substitute teacher and a lifeguard, coached basketball and football and worked at a recreation center in the evenings. He began teaching English and math full time for those with learning disabilities at a vocational technical high school. In 1977, he finally began his law enforcement career as a state trooper.





While working in law enforcement on state and county levels, Chief Costa garnered a wide range of experience, all of which he uses for the city of DeSoto. Law enforcement departments vary from city to county to state. "Basically state and county officers deal with crimes from a distant perspective and handle traffic enforcement on state highways," the chief explained.

State and county officers may be the only law enforcement for some small towns. City officers deal with local traffic violations, violence, crimes, robberies and burglaries and relate more closely with their community.

During his 25 years as a state police officer, Chief Costa worked in many capacities: under cover, organized crime, rape, cocaine, a major marijuana smuggling case and even two facial reconstruction cases. "Solving homicide cases probably brings the most satisfaction," he shared. "When you start with absolutely no ID, work through a complete investigation, find the criminal and make an arrest, you really get to know the family of the victim and bring some closure to them. What's hard is not being able to solve or prove enough to result in a conviction. The saddest is

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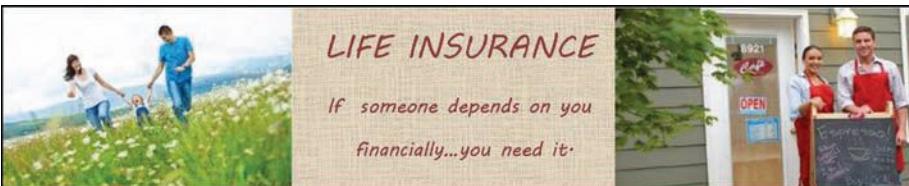
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not being able to ID a victim or dealing with the death or abuse of a child. Unsolved crimes relating to children are the hardest. And yet," he admitted, "you have to be able to set your emotions aside and work all types of cases with a clear mind.

"I had been running all the investigations for the Bristol County DA office — pretty much a career pinnacle — when I retired as a detective lieutenant after 25 years," the chief remarked. But at 49, he still had a lot to give another police department.





"Pride stands for being professional, respectful, intelligent, dependable and ethical."

A close friend in Texas invited him to come see what might be available here. "I worked for the Texas Lottery Commission, which provided a great opportunity to learn the area and work with different law enforcement agencies and develop a good connection with the DA," he explained. He investigated fraud and false claims in small retail stores with gambling machines.

When Lupe Valdez was elected sheriff, his friend took his résumé to her, resulting in his becoming assistant chief for seven years. "Dallas County had about the same amount of employees as the Massachusetts State Police did, but covered less territory. I was chief deputy over general services: patrol, traffic, intelligence, dispatch, training, internal affairs — everything but the jail," he stated. "The job provided countywide community involvement, which developed into excellent resources and relationships — quite a global feel."

Interestingly enough, Chief Costa attended the National Academy, a 10-week course for city, county and state

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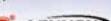
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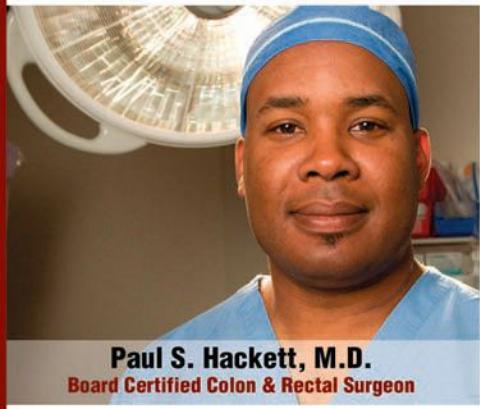
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officers put on by the FBI at Quantico, at the same time former DeSoto Police Chief Brodnax attended. "We roomed across the hall and became friends," the chief added.

"I have always wanted to be a chief of police," he admitted. "My job here is to make sure the department is taken care of so the community will be taken care of. It's my responsibility to provide tools and resources to better the department. Every chief should leave a department better equipped and more technologically advanced than it was when he/she got there. For example, Chief Brodnax saw to it every patrol officer had body cams in 2011. We have advanced that program so all officers, including code enforcement, animal control and the 17 jailers, have body cams."

While you have more resources working in the state or county, the support is mostly administrative and therefore somewhat distant. In the city, you are working hand-in-hand with other city departments, city administration, city council and the school district, where the department has four school resource officers. "I really feel that here, on the city level, I can have more of a personal, direct effect," the chief declared.

Chief Costa took on a personal challenge of getting more people on the streets without hiring more officers. When he came in, no lieutenants were working night shifts, so nights were not as supervised. Now lieutenants are

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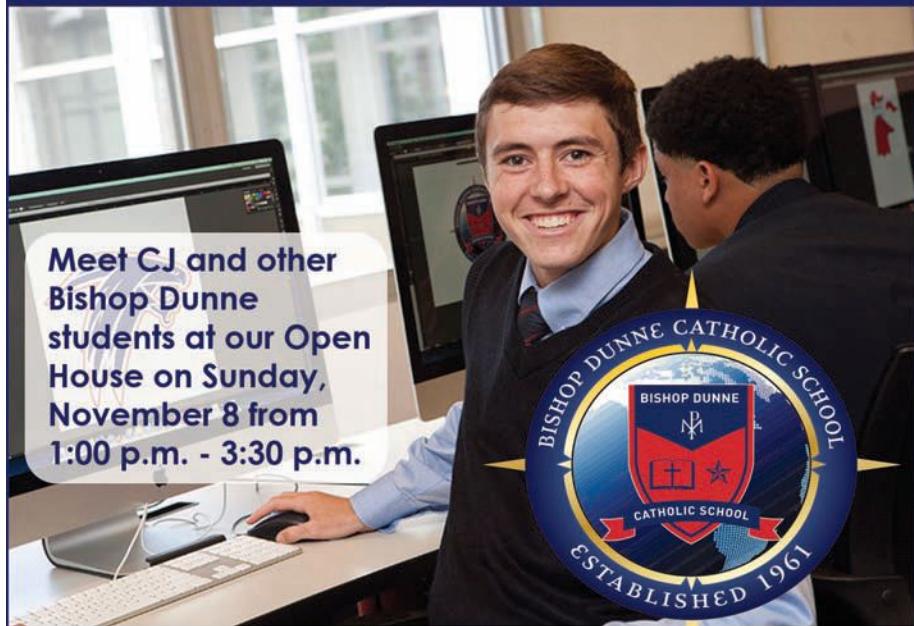
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assigned to every shift and each has a district under their responsibility. This has created a sort of competition: Each one is endeavoring to make more contacts within the community, to increase their neighborhood patrols and visibility. Crime is down and response time is down by three minutes, because the officers are already out on the streets.

Each district is unique and has different challenges depending on whether there is more retail or more park or more homes or apartments. "I challenge our officers to know what goes on in their district and to develop a plan and strategy to be more proactive," Chief Costa said. He is mentoring them to manage and administrate. "Being involved in the community is more than just responding to crime, which is why I encourage them to be a part of home owner association meetings and community events.

"At the end of my professional life," Chief Costa stated, "I want to look back and know I did something not everybody can do." For those in or considering law enforcement, the chief offers this advice: "Be sure you maintain a good quality of life. Learn as much as you can and continue to grow. Never become satisfied or dissociate from the people. Don't allow yourself to become jaded by those who dislike you. Always remember the reason you went into law enforcement. And have PRIDE in all you do." **NOW**



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GROWING A

Winter Garden

— By Virginia Riddle



As September nights start to take on that “fall’s coming soon” feeling, gardeners might consider their hard work to be over for the year, except for harvesting the last of the summer’s bounty. While letting the soil rest after the first frost and throughout the winter months is a choice, gardeners this far south can enjoy planting cold-weather vegetables and herbs, which can’t be grown during the hot, late springtime and even hotter summers. September is decision-making time.

Should you start closing down gardening for the year or start thinking green for winter and enjoy growing food for the table well into the coming year?

Take a Break, But First ...

Fall and winter crops have a better flavor, since they are not under the stress of the summer sun. Fewer insects and diseases also help their growth. Those second plantings of tomatoes in August are going to taste great in November. Keep on a regular watering and feeding schedule and enjoy the bounty of

vegetables that results from cooler fall days and nights.

With the approach of the first predicted frost, protect container-grown plants by covering them or storing them temporarily in a protected place. Veggies from your last harvest can ripen when set on paper towels in window sills or, in the case of green tomatoes, enjoy using them in chow-chow (relish) or fried green tomato recipes.

As plants die during the summer and into the fall, gardens have space to fill. Before retiring a garden space until spring, plant a winter cover crop — rye, wheat, oats, ryegrass, hairy vetch or legumes. Sow between August and mid-October, so the roots will become established before the first freeze. These plants hold in soil and will add organic matter back to the soil when tilled under in the spring.



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Planning Your Cold-weather Harvest

As the fall nights cool, it's the perfect time to get winter crop seedlings started. Cool winter plant choices center on roots and leafy veggies and herbs: kale, spinach, Brussels sprouts, Swiss chard,



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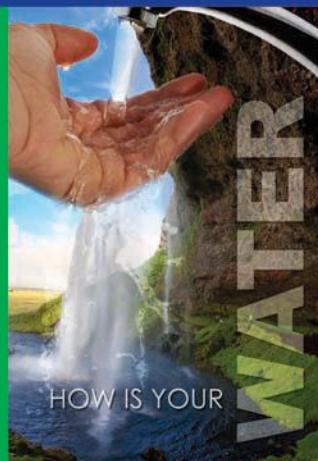
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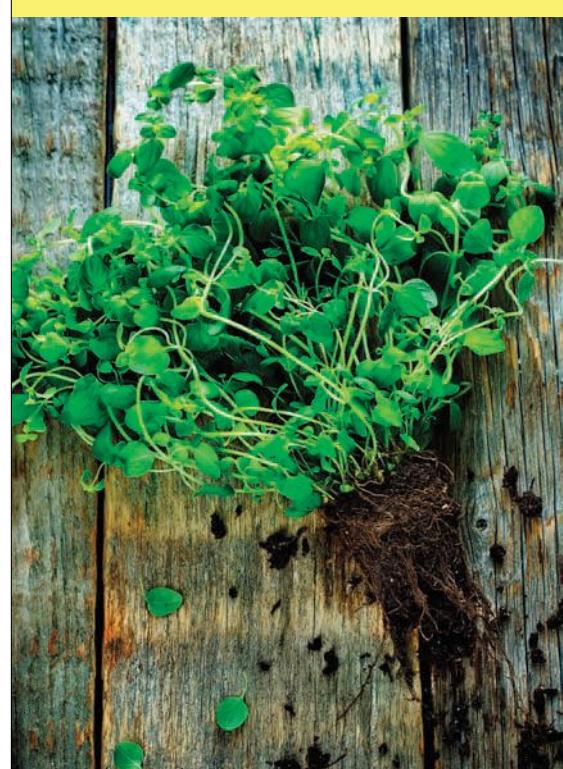


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While rain might be plentiful in the winter, keep a water source handy for occasional dry periods. Plant roots will not freeze as easily if the surrounding ground is watered prior to a freeze. Remember to feed the winter crops every two to four weeks with a well-balanced fertilizer.

If a severe winter is predicted, spend some time this fall by building and/or collecting some season extenders. Repurposed old shower doors and glass window frames along with hay bales for insulation become cold frames. Hotcaps or *cloches* (the French word for bell) are mini greenhouses, which retain the warmth from the sun and protect the plant from being covered in frost. Plastic milk jugs with cut-away bottoms or garage sale plastic punch bowls make great *cloches* to protect low-growing greens. Another, but more expensive protective solution is to build hooped row tunnels and covers. Detailed instructions, photos and videos for all of these suggestions can be found on the Internet.

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Planning the Spring Garden

As days get shorter, it's time to think of next spring's garden. What worked well this past season, and what new crop will be included for next year? Did the family enjoy eating fresh veggies? If so, think of adding fruit and nut plant varieties to the garden between December and February, the dormant time span for most fruit and nut plants in Texas. These months are also the time to prune fruit trees that are already a part of your garden plan and to build frames for berries. The most popular fruit and nut varieties — blackberries, blueberries, figs, grapes, pears, plums, strawberries,

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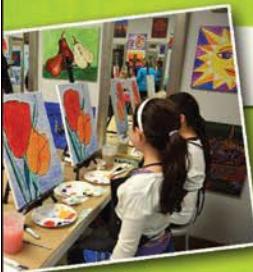


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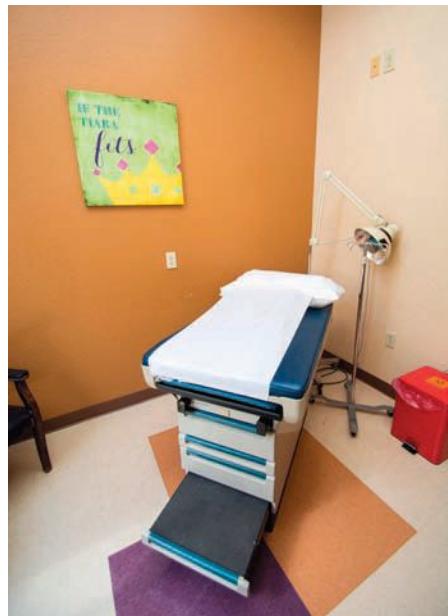


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Dr. Pam Phillips (center), MA Theresa Smith (left) and RN Dorothy Parker are ready to listen, care and serve everyone who walks in the door of Phillips Family Medical.

Putting the Care in Family Medical

At Phillips Family Medical, family is the key word when it comes to treating patients. — By Beverly Shay

Pamela Phillips, PhD, RN, FNP-C, loves caring for people, and she's absolutely partial to the elderly. Born in California, Pamela lived in 12 different states, plus Germany and Japan, due to her father's military career. "My father retired while I was in high school in Denison, Texas, where I met my husband, Ben," Pamela recalled. "We went to prom together, dated one-and-a-half years and married 40 years ago." Ben, who now runs the family businesses, was formerly in law enforcement and fraud investigation.

"I didn't want to be a teacher or go into secretarial work," Pamela remarked. "So, I went into a two-year nursing program, becoming an RN by the time I was 20." She completed her bachelor's in nursing at UTA. Ten years later, she also earned her master's in nursing, was licensed as a nurse practitioner and

certified in family medicine. She earned her doctorate in nursing from Texas Woman's University in 2002.

"I have worked in labor/delivery, postpartum, ICU, NICU, a psych unit and served in the employee health clinic at John Peter Smith Hospital. The most fun job was working with the young adult clinic, a collaboration with Parkland, MHMR and various school ISDs. "I worked in three different schools and loved it. The students called me Dr. Mom," Pamela stated.

While working at John Peter Smith Hospital, she opened the hospital's home health agency with Starla Timberlake. Later, their husbands talked Pamela and Starla into opening their own agency: Heritage HomeCare in 1996. "I grew to love working with elderly patients, which led us to open a private-pay senior care facility: Aimee's House in Duncanville named after my daughter. In 2010,

Business NOW

we opened a second Aimee's House in North Dallas." Recently, Aimee opened Heritage Plus, which provides caregivers and private-duty nursing care.

Pamela worked with Dr. James Race part time since 1994 and was working at Cedar Ridge Medical Clinic part time. In October 2013, the laws changed where nurse practitioners, such as Pamela, could open their own practices with a backup physician. "I felt this was exactly what God had been preparing and leading me to do," Pamela shared. "We opened in May 2014 with zero patients and now have 600! When I tell the new clients we get every week that I am a nurse practitioner, I can see them relax, because I really do drop everything, listen to them and provide family care. The medical scene is changing and many doctors are aging out or choosing to specialize, with fewer medical practitioners to replace them. I feel it is important for nurse practitioners to step up and fill the need for providing general health care, so doctors can be the specialists."

"I grew to love working with elderly patients."

Pamela's doctoral research was in diabetes, so she sees many patients with diabetes and hypertension. "Along with our state-of-the-art EKG machine, we have a point-of-care lab, meaning we can immediately provide test results for cholesterol, hemoglobin, A1C, diabetes, urine, pregnancy, flu and strep screening and digital X-rays," she stated. With her new ABI machine, Pamela can measure circulation in arms and legs, a helpful tool in treating diabetes. Pamela is excited to also offer bio-identical hormone replacement therapy pellets and topical creams, because some indications of aging are actually hormone deficiencies. Phillips Family Medical accepts Medicare and other insurances, treats patients of all ages, provides school physicals for \$18 and offers massage therapy (by appointment only) — all in a very personalized environment. Come, see for yourself. **NOW**



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Theresa Smith, MA



Dr. Pamela Phillips
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- BEN P

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You may be suffering from Peripheral Arterial Disease, (PAD) a potentially limb-threatening condition that puts you at greater risk for cardiovascular disease, heart attack and stroke. Also at risk are people with high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes. Smokers and people with diabetes are more likely to develop complications, like gangrene of the leg. African-Americans are at a greater risk for developing PAD than any other racial or ethnic group. 1 in every 20 Americans over the age of 50 has PAD.



PAD is a serious but treatable vascular condition that occurs when sticky plaque that builds up in the arteries hardens and blocks the vessels, limiting the flow of oxygen-rich blood to the limbs. Treatment options include lifestyle changes, medication, minimally invasive procedures to restore blood flow. Smokers are four times more likely to develop PAD. Most people are aware of coronary artery disease, but fewer people know about vascular disease. People need to understand that it's not normal for their leg to hurt when they walk. It's not a sign of aging or of being out of shape. Phillips Family Medical can painlessly test you for PAD with our state of the art Ankle-Brachial Index (ABI) machine. Call us for an appointment today!

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Around TownNOW



Duncanville Community Theatre was able to present over \$3,000 from their fundraising performance of *All the King's Women* to Duncanville Outreach Ministry.



Phyllis Stewart of the Cedar Hill Museum of History thanks Dylan Duran who won contest for naming the plesiosaur, Plessie.



DeSoto High School students Chawntae Donegan, Felicia Johnson and Alexis Berry at the NAACP National ACT-SO Competition.



Bryce Dawson begins training for Trinity Christian School's football season under Coach Glenn Young's direction.



Duncanville Chamber welcomes new owners of Everything Nice, Liz and Michael Arrambide, with a ribbon cutting.



The Duncanville Sparklers inclusive cheer team traveled to Los Angeles to perform at the Special Olympics World Games.



Texas Trust Credit Union will continue partnership with DeSoto ISD by offering an online financial education game for students in grades 6-12 and savings kits for elementary students.



Lions Club members Dick North, Fred Hart, Renee Johnson and Paul Buckley sponsor special needs event at Moseley Pool in DeSoto.



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Retirement Sharpens Focus on Risk

No matter how carefully you try to protect your portfolio, you can't stamp out risk. In various forms, it is always present, ready to subvert any ideas about safety.

In your earlier years of investing, if you concluded that the assets you held were not very wisely chosen, you had time on your side. By simply restructuring the elements of your portfolio, you could allow many years of growth and compounding values to overcome earlier mistakes. Historically, at least, financial assets have tended to grow in value despite cycles of recession and recovery and bear and bull markets.

When you retire, the pattern of market cycles won't change, but your personal timeline has. It is not as likely to work in your favor. What can you do?

Sharpening the Image

First, you can sharpen your focus as you near retirement. Don't put off carefully analyzing how your portfolio is functioning. If it doesn't appear to be ideally suited to your changing needs, make adjustments sooner rather than later.

The asset allocation that works best for you depends largely on your time horizon and your ability to tolerate risk. Your time horizon is shorter than before. How do you regard your risk tolerance now, in the wake of the market volatility over the past two years? Within your mix of cash, fixed income and equity investments, are you diversified in an appropriate manner, so as to provide a firm financial foundation for the kind of retirement you've planned? Are there other considerations that need to be addressed, such as concentrated equity or mutual fund positions?

Are you better able, now that you're a little older, to estimate what financial resources you'll need to handle family or health issues? There are no certain answers, and health and longevity are unknowns, but realistically assessing their likely impact

on your retirement may help you better position the assets in your portfolio. Poor health can lead to costly care that can quickly drain your wealth. If you're in great shape, on the other hand, you may decide to travel more extensively and longer into your retired years than you had imagined — that could strain your resources, too.

Risk Realities

In retirement, you face the same risks you always have as an investor, but your frames of reference are different. Keep those changing points of reference in mind as you monitor the performance of the assets in your portfolio. You may have easily made the necessary changes to turn your financial engine from an accumulation machine into an income generator, but that doesn't mean your investments aren't subject to the same market, inflation and currency risks they always faced.

It may be time to give your portfolio a little retirement-related risk therapy. If you have changes in life circumstances that should be reflected in your portfolio call your financial advisor. **NOW**

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Jonathan Pope is a Raymond James Financial Advisor based in Duncanville.



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Allergy Triggers

— By Betty Tryon, BSN

Achoo! It isn't springtime, but your constant sneezing and runny nose make a box of tissues your best friend. During the spring, allergies are expected and have become almost a rite of passage through the season, for some people. However, fall allergies come as a surprise to many. These allergies are called seasonal because the allergens are present in sufficient quantities during specific times of the year. Perennial allergens are located in the atmosphere year-round. The symptoms, in addition to sneezing and a runny nose, can include watery eyes, an itchy nose and itchy throat and eyes. They all appear as early as August and last through October.

There are several causes or triggers for the onset of allergic symptoms. Ragweed is the most common. Ragweed can be found almost anywhere, but particularly in the Eastern and Midwestern part of the United States. The pollen released from the blooming plant is a fine powder that has been detected up to 400 miles out to sea!

Another contributor to fall allergies is mold. Mold is a fungus that thrives in moist areas and is virtually everywhere. Its spores are small, light and easily airborne. Mold is not only found in damp areas in your bathroom, under sink areas prone to leakage and basements but outdoors in compost heaps, under leaves and in the soil. It has an earthy smell and a fuzzy appearance. Check ceilings and floors where

there are water stains, look for the source and correct it.

If you are allergic to cedar and live in Central Texas, most people can expect some allergy problems. The trees are quite numerous in this region. The heaviest times of pollination will occur in the months of December, January and February.

The best way to escape the plague of being an allergy sufferer is to avoid its triggers, if at all possible. Practical suggestions would be to keep your home as dust-free as possible. Before you turn on your heating system for the year, clean your vents and use a high-efficiency particulate air filter known as a HEPA filter. Use air conditioning in your home and car to avoid the offending pollen. Shower and change your clothes when coming in from outside. Wear masks with yard work. Some of the remedies, such as antihistamines, decongestants, cough medications and nasal sprays found over-the-counter, may or may not be advisable for you. Check with your doctor if your symptoms do not decrease. You may need allergy shots or prescription medication. There are ways to lessen your misery, but you may need help. **NOW**

This article is for general information only and does not constitute medical advice. Consult with your physician if you have questions regarding this topic.

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Calendar

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September 12

Festival en Duncanville: all day, Armstrong Park. Call for details: (972) 780-5074.

September 15

14th Annual Taste of Cedar Hill/Business Expo: 4:00-8:00 p.m., CH Rec. Ctr.

September 17

Congestive Heart Failure Workshop: 3:00 p.m., Methodist Charlton. Nutrition, Q&A, activity options, recognizing depression and more. (214) 947-9694.

September 18

Senior Dance, 92nd Roadhouse: 7:00 p.m., Hopkins Sr. Ctr., DV. (972) 298-0667.

September 19

Paper shredding/recycling: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., DV library. (972) 707-3830.

Write to Publish: Climbing Toward Success workshop: 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m., DeSoto Civic Center. Workshop by DAWG features well-published writers' experiences/methods. Limited registration: \$75 w/ lunch. www.dallaswriters.org

Wine and Whiskers: Friends of Tri-City Animal Shelter Gala 6:00-10:00 p.m.,

Dogwood Canyon. Music, appetizers, drinks, auctions, David Hira. \$75: Tri-City Animal Shelter, Pet Medical Center (DV) and Camp Bow Wow.

39th Annual Fall Festival: 1:00-10:00 p.m., St. Jude Catholic Church, 500 E. Dallas St. For more details, contact Russ Hart at (817) 228-6509.

September 24

Hillside Village Wine Walk: 5:00-8:00 p.m. wine tastings, entertainment and discounts at restaurants and retailers.

DeSoto Living! A Celebration of Life and Style: 4:00-8:00 p.m., DeSoto Civic Center. Demos, fashion show, makeovers and music. Seniors/\$5 (4:00-5:00 p.m.); general/\$15; VIP (hors d'oeuvres, wine, beer, massage)/\$25. (972) 224-3565.

September 26

Drug Take Back: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., DV Police, 203 E. Wheatland Rd. (972) 780-5027 or dsisk@duncanvillepd.com or Walgreen's, 501 E. Beltline, CH.

September 27

Color half marathon: 8:00 a.m. and 5K: 8:30 a.m. benefitting Dogwood Canyon Audubon

Center. Route begins/ends at the center. Half: \$65 until **Sept. 25**; \$75 **Sept. 26, 27**. 5K: \$30; group discounts: (972) 291-5130 www.colorhalf.com.

September 28

Southwest Dallas County Parkinson's Group: 6:30-8:00 p.m., Trinity UMC, 1302 S. Clark Rd., DV. Speaker: Dr. Elmyra Encarnacion. (972) 298-4556.

October 8 — 10, 15 — 17

Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple* directed by Danielle Clemens: 8:00 p.m., Duncanville Community Theatre. Tickets: (972) 780-5707. www.dctheatre.org

Saturdays through November

Fall Festivals of Cultures: 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., International Museum of Cultures, 411 U.S. 67 Frontage Rd., DV. Adults/\$5; school-age children/free. **Sept. 12** Uganda; **19** Pacific Rim; **26** South America; **Oct. 3** Mexico; **10** Central America; **17** India; **24** Africa; **Nov. 7** American Indian; **14** Children of the world.

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In the Kitchen With Kizzy Miller

— By Beverly Shay

Born in Ruleville, Mississippi, Kizzy Miller developed a passion and talent for preparing first-class Southern cuisine. "Food isn't only my passion, it's my heritage," shared Kizzy, who was influenced by her grandmother, father and an aunt who believed in the artistry of food. "I remember picking tomatoes in the summer, pecans in the fall and greens in the winter — food is a family tradition. I tried to replicate my grandmother and her friends' yeast rolls and jelly cakes in my Easy-Bake oven."

Today Kizzy's recipes, reminiscent of her childhood days, mingle her own special touches with love. She mixes smoky flavors from the grill with fresh herbs from local vendors. "If you can imagine it," Kizzy remarked, "I can create it!" **NOW**

Fresh Green Bean Medley

4 Tbsp. margarine (divided use)
2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
2 lbs. fresh green beans
Sea salt, to taste
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
2 Tbsp. parsley flakes
1/2 yellow onion, diced
1/2 each: green and red bell peppers, diced
1 zucchini, diced
Garlic powder, to taste
4 Roma tomatoes, diced

- 1.** Heat 2 Tbsp. margarine and olive oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Add green beans; sprinkle with salt, pepper and parsley flakes.
- 2.** Layer onions, peppers and zucchini over green beans. Season with garlic powder and more salt and pepper, if desired. Dot with remaining margarine. Cover and simmer until green beans are tender. Add tomatoes and heat through.

Blackened Tilapia With Crawfish Cream Sauce

Fish:
2 Tbsp. paprika
1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper
2 tsp. dried oregano
1 tsp. kosher salt
1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
10 6-oz. tilapia fillets
3 Tbsp. olive oil

Cream Sauce:
1/2 each: yellow onion, red and green bell peppers, diced
1/2 cup butter
2 cups half-and-half
Louisiana Cajun Seasoning, to taste
Tony Chachere's Original Creole Seasoning, to taste
Sea salt, to taste
1/4 cup flour
1 12-oz. pkg. Boudreaux's Crawfish Tail Meat
2 cups cooked rice

1. For fish: Combine first 5 ingredients in a small bowl.

2. Place fillets in a single layer on a large baking sheet. Lightly coat both sides of fish with oil; liberally rub seasoning mix onto both sides of fish.

3. Broil, watching closely, until slightly charred (about 5 minutes). Turn and broil until cooked through (about 5 minutes).

4. For sauce: In a small skillet, sauté onion and peppers in butter.

5. In a separate pot, cook half-and-half over medium heat; add vegetables and seasonings to taste. Scoop small amount of liquid into a cup measurer; add flour and stir until there are no lumps. Slowly, return half-and-half to the pot. Taste to see if more seasoning is needed. Add crawfish tails.

6. Serve fish over rice and top with sauce.

Kelby's Summer Salad

1 head romaine lettuce, chopped
1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
2 jalapeños, deseeded and sliced
1 4-oz. can sliced black olives
1/2 lb. fresh strawberries, sliced
1/2 cup feta cheese
1 English cucumber, sliced
Balsamic vinaigrette

1. Combine first 7 ingredients in a bowl; toss with vinaigrette.

Aunt Katie's Cream Cheese Pie

2 8-oz. blocks cream cheese
1/2 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 tsp. pure vanilla
1 tsp. lemon flavoring
2 tsp. lemon juice
1 graham cracker pie crust

1. In a bowl, cream cheese and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time; stir thoroughly.

2. Mix in next 3 ingredients. Pour into crust. Place pan in water bath and bake at 350 F for 40-50 minutes.

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